DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 400 615 EA 028 010

AUTHOR Nixon, Jon; And Others
TITLE Encouraging Learning: Towards a Theory of the Learning School.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-335-19087-1
PUB DATE 96
NOTE 152p.
AVAILABLE FROM Open University Press, Taylor & Francis, 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007 ($24.95 payable to Taylor & Francis).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Democracy; *Educational Change; *Educationally Disadvantaged; Educational Policy; Foreign Countries; Free Enterprise System; *Learning Strategies; *School Restructuring; Secondary Education; Social Influences; *Social Structure; Sociocultural Patterns; Student Motivation
IDENTIFIERS *United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

Serious confrontation of the problems facing education requires a reform of the organizing principles of learning: a shift from an instrumental purpose to the moral and political purpose of cultural renewal, from learning for economic purposes to learning for citizenship. This book focuses on the work of secondary schools in the contexts of disadvantage and on the overwhelming need to motivate young people and foster in them a sense of purpose and optimism. Chapter 1 presents an overview of changes in educational policy in England and Wales from 1988 to the present. It argues that alternative reform agendas of recent years have failed to grasp the magnitude of disadvantage or to understand the social, moral, and political significance of change. The second chapter explores the different conceptions of learning that have prevailed in the postwar period and what they imply for developing young people's senses of worth and capacities. It defines learning in terms of agency and capacity and describes the institutional structures and cultural forms that underlay the different learning patterns. Chapters 3 and 4 articulate the codes, practices, and institutional structures of schools that express the values of active learning, which are essential if schools are to become "learning schools." The process requires shifts at a number of levels to a value-driven institutional level, integrative practices, and codes of cultural differentiation. The final chapter develops a vision of schools within a learning democracy. Five figures and an index are included. (Contains 117 references.) (LMI)

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